Rail link between Tuticorin and Manamadurai

20. SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to connect Tuticorin and Manamadurai via Kamuthi by rail;

(b) whether Government are aware that this scheme will reduce the distance by over 1000 km; and

(c) whether Government will allocate funds in the Budget for 1997-98 for the survey and execution of this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. The distance by the present route from Manamadurai to Tuticorin is 182 km. The appropriate length of the suggested line would be about 100 km, as such the saving will be only about 80 km and not over 1000 kms.

(c) This will be known only when the budget is presented.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Trend of Agricultural Production in North-East

1. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the trend of agricultural production in Assam and other North-Eastern States;

(b) whether Government are contemplating any measures to increase the production and productivity of agriculture in these States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The compound growth rate in production of foodgrains, oilseeds and jute/mesta in North-Eastern States during 1980-81 to 1995-96 (on a point-to-point basis) is as follows :—

(Per cent per annum)

States	Foodgrains	Oilseeds	Jute/Mesta
Arunachal Pradesh	3.83	10.20	*
Assam	1.85	2.31	-0.66
Manipur	1.12	-1.70	*
Meghalaya	-0.18	1.27	-2.15
Mizoram	8.81	17.80	*
Nagaland	5.60	19.29	11.33
Tripura	1.14	4.33	-6.77

*Crop not grown.

(b) and (c) To increase production and productivity in agriculture, the Government is implementing various crop specific and sector specific developmental programmes in North-Eastern States. These include Integrated Cereals Development Programme for Rice Based Crooping System Areas; Special Jute Development Programme; Sustainable Development of Sugarcane Based Cropping System Areas; Oilseeds Production Programmes; and many schemes for development of horticulture, fisheries and other allied activities.

Industry into Starvation Deaths in Orissa

2. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Human Rights Commission has investigated charges of starvation deaths in Orissa on his request; and

(b) if so, the findings thereof and further action taken, if any, on the basis of the report of the Commission?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) A Team of officers of the National Human Rights Commission had undertaken a preliminary visit to Orissa on 12—14 December, 1996 for collection of facts about the reported starvation deaths. Government have not received any report from the Commission in this regard so far.